

HIGH LIGHTS



December - 1943

Deborah James Dwyer

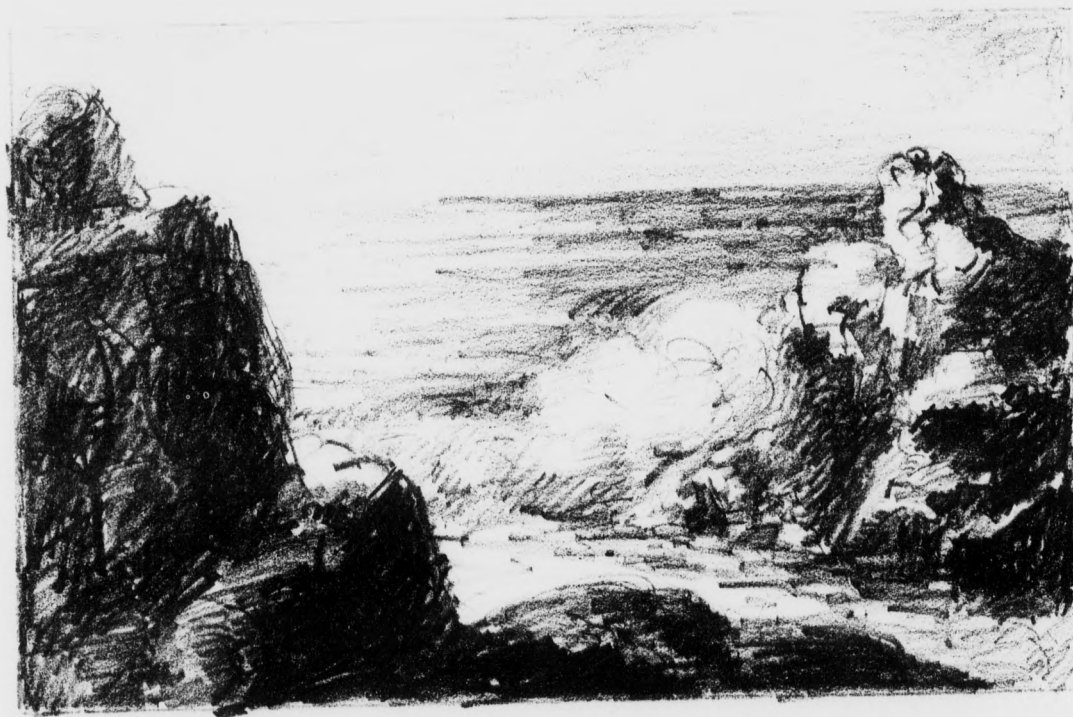
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HIGH LIGHTS

DECEMBER 1943

Volume 4 Number 11

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ILLUSTRATIONS

The cover drawing and the advertising illustrations are lithographs, the work of Alfred James Dewey. The lettering was done by Elmer M. Weese. The printing of the covers is the work of George Morgridge, done at the Burns Printing Company of Pasadena, California.

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HIGH LIGHTS, from the foothills; issued monthly by Sierra Madre Arts Guild at the Wistaria Vine Gardens in Sierra Madre, California.

THE TRAVELERS (For Margery)

Helen Ferguson Caukin

The years that trained our lives apart
Made no provision for return
Where once we were to what we were
And what was our concern.

And one who stopped at junction-pause
And there let dash the vessel's clay
Before she'd deeply drunk of youth,
Took speed from this delay.

No supple grace attends steep years
For narrowing a decade down
Where rush of memory frames in shards
A loved face in a town

(As if the years could take a shape
For times that helped a heart to grow!
It is the backward heart that keeps
What the forward years let go).

All tracks that bear the forms outbound,
By labored fueling of breath,
Converge at length -- do passengers? --
In terminal of death.

(New Mexico Quarterly Review)

BROKEN STICKS

A little of solitude now and then, a little of being alone with our thoughts, is a stimulus to the mind and a boon to the spirit: nothing but thinking produces the power of thought; nothing but the power of thought sets man apart from the unreasoning brute. The power of thought, the power of reason, is our one entree to the world of spiritual things. But man, for the most part, does not like to think: thinking is hard work and distasteful. It is much easier for most of us to dig ditches for eight hours a day than to struggle with a mental problem for thirty minutes.

That which occupies our minds in our idle waking moments, that which we so fondly refer to as our thoughts, usually consists of nothing but disjointed ruminations over the past and worries about the future. These pale ghosts of thoughts are seldom pleasant; they are often such things as we want to forget. Man was created a thinking animal; yet, systematic and directive thinking is very rare. Is it any wonder, then, that mankind advances so slowly? Ye shall not rise except by thought alone.

Many kinds of animals are social creatures. They band together in herds for protection or in colonies for a division of labor. Man is the only animal in all creation that seeks the society of his kind in order to escape from himself. We are forever seeking companionship; that is to say, we are forever seeking the shortest way out. When companionship fails us, when we have no friend to whom we can talk, we must do the next best thing to obviate the need of thought; we must busy ourselves with something, however trivial. If there is absolutely nothing that we can find to do, we grab a book, a magazine, a newspaper, or we give up and go to sleep -- anything, anything to shut our minds to the untried perils of thought.

Put a man into solitary confinement, in darkness and in silence, where there is nothing for him to do but think. Furnish him with every need and comfort that he can use in this situation except the one thing, companionship. In a few hours he becomes uneasy, in a few days he is quite "beside himself," and in a few weeks he is mad. No more terrible punishment than this is reserved for unruly prisoners. What is it that has driven him mad? Not the silence and darkness. He knows that these cannot hurt him. He knows also that he will finally be released, that he will come to no bodily harm. No, it is none of these. But left utterly alone with his thoughts, perhaps for the first time in his life, he is terrified at finding himself suddenly in the presence of very bad company, leaning over the abyss upon broken sticks.

Generally, we do not like solitude; we do not like to be left alone, for loneliness has a way of exposing us unmercifully to the need of thought. No one is so lonely as he whose thoughts have deserted him or have failed to comfort him. In our loneliness, we cry out for companionship like a child crying for a light in the dark; yet, except on a purely physical basis, it is not companionship that we really want, but escape from our empty selves. Thus it is that, while we are continually seeking companionship, we are continually being disappointed; for companionship, as a

substitute for thought, is bound to fail us at last. Men may be born free, but they are born equal neither in their intelligence nor in their disposition. In the long run, after the subjects of "shop" and the commonplaces have been exhausted, your average companion will either tell you nothing or he will speak a language that you cannot understand.

True companionship is to be sustained only between the sexes, where love is the compelling force and where reason has no concern. A man will marry a wife, and together they will "live happily forever after," as the story-books say, while they remain strangers to each other in thought to the end of their days. But while we usually get on with the members of the opposite sex, none of us can for long really tolerate those of our own. The latter, since they rival us in every particular, have simply nothing to recommend them at all. Good manners cloak our moves; but under cover, every man's hand is found lifted against every other man; while every woman, deep in her heart, despises womankind. Put two animals of the same kind and sex upon a deserted island, and there together they will live out their days in perfect peace. Put two men or two women in the same situation, the very best of friends; within a few weeks they will "get on each other's nerves," and within a few months they will surely quarrel violently to the point of murder.

A little of companionship, and we are filled that were empty; a little of solitude, and we are empty that were filled. Yet solitude, which most of us so strenuously avoid, is the very thing that the great thinkers of history have deliberately sought. Time after time they have gone out into the wilderness their forty days, there, free from distraction, to wrestle in thought with the problems of their world. When they went forth, except for their power of thought, they were just as weak and as perplexed as ourselves; when they returned to society, they were forever afterward the masters of men.

What a pity it is, for our own sakes, that so many of us are not always good companions in thought upon the long highway of life: we have to travel so much of the way in our own company. When another person bores us, we can always run away; but where shall we run when we become a bore to ourselves?

Rodin carved "The Thinker" as a seated figure, its head supported on its fist: thought is a heaviness, calling for many props.

L.B.W.

HORACE

the guild mouse

i am tired out. i am like evry other poor sole who today is slaving away doing his bit for the war effort.

evrybody who went away from the last meating of the arts guild did not go away as i did. i went away filled with the nollege that i had found sumthing that called for all that i had. i nu i had found myself.

mrs mouse does not beleef me so mutch about this feeling i hav for what i am doing down at santa anita. she says as "all i want is to get away from home and be with the men." she has a little job over in pasadena, cleaning up of nites, but i tried that and i didnt find as how it was good enuf pickings.

but down at santa anita i can use the nollege i hav got thru listening to alf teaching art class for many a year and nobody can listen to alf teaching art for many a year and not get sum idear about it, even a mouse.

but us mice is smart as we hav to be to stay aliv and not be dinner for sum cat and after the meating i got together with sarjent stewart of the army visual art training group and offered my help. i dont want anybody to think as how i am doing a lot, i woodnt boast, i just got a small job helping to train one of the sections down there witch puts in backgrounds on piktures witch is gib to the sojers to look at. maybe most folks woodnt want the job i got as not many but mice cud do the work, but many of those sojer artistes who work down there and aint in the no wonder as how them backgrounds get on their pitchers when they leef them out at nite. but sarjent stewart and i no. i think as how even alf wood see that i hav nollege of what he calls tone but in ordinary un-art words means lite and dark.

i hav had a lot of fun working down there tho i hav had sum imbare ressing moments. those who herd the last meating no how pitchers are drawn showing sum parts in a color so a sojer who never saw the insides of a gun for an instance wood no witch parts was witch. i can never forget the time i nocked over the red paint and made a gun barrel the color of a bolt. the next day a sojer from tennessee had a big assembly problem and spent all morning trying to screw that gun barrel onto a nut. o well axidents will sum times happen lots of times.

yes i am tired out. in fact i am all dun up.

NEW GUINEA SCENE

Corp. Bernard Wynne

Back on the ship and off again. The sea is an exceptionally deep shade of blue out here, just the shade of ultramarine as it comes from the tube. The wake of the ship leaves a most brilliant and beautiful shade of turquoise, in fact, the foam is more blue than white. From the sea, these islands look like a paradise with all the greenery and the palm trees of the beach against the lovely skies we have here.

Well, while in Australia, I saw Eleanor Roosevelt, and I even spoke to her. She stopped to ask Sid Weinstein about the Aussie hat he was wearing, and I said hello to her and she wished me luck. She wore a Red Cross uniform. I was surprised at how old she looks - her hair is very grey. She seems a very nice person. It is funny I had to come all the way to Australia to see her.

We are beginning to get settled just a bit here now. This is quite a place. It is really quite beautiful here. The palm trees and banana clumps and other huge trees covered with hanging vines, are just like the jungle movies we've seen. I never thought the jungle could be so dense. Most places you can hardly see more than a few feet. There are plenty of coconut trees and vines. We have large trees which canopy our camp. Some of them resemble the magnolia, one that evidently drops the flowers we find in the morning. These flowers look like the magnolia blooms - white, about six inches in diameter, but with a large tassel that stands up from the center. The tassel blends from white at the base to an orchid shade at the tip. There are many huge trees here which would be magnificent by themselves, but are lost in the jungles. Our camp was cleared from very dense jungle and we uncovered a plantation of coconut palms in nice orderly rows. Some of the coconut plantations which have been temporarily abandoned are almost hidden with the vegetation.

This should be an entomologist's paradise. The place is actually crawling with insects. There are lots of different types of ants, and all shapes, sizes and colors of other insects. There are grasshoppers three and four inches long, and the praying mantis, very beautiful birds and butterflies, and many different kinds of spiders and lizards. I saw a lovely violet butterfly this morning. The undersides of its wings were a dull brown so that it was camouflaged when it lighted. There are also black and white butterflies, and another one that is all black with a white spot on the tip of the wing. Yesterday I saw a small tandem

winged insect of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wingspread. It was maroon with a spot of vermillion on each wing tip, and looked about the texture of velvet. I saw a lizard today a bright yellow green. We have to be very careful of mosquitoes because of malaria; so we use 612 repellent and nets and take atabrine every day. The atabrine we take is in pill form and is a great help in preventing malaria, while, if contracted, it lessens the effects of the disease. I went back about 200 yards from the beach, and the place is full of swamps and plenty of mosquitoes.

There are a few things that I don't like here. One is the rats that run around at night. They come into the tents a lot. Of course, our mosquito nets protect us, but these rats do carry the fleas that give typhus. A few days ago I had a day off, but I can't say it was either pleasant or voluntary. I left my gloves out over night, and when I put them on I was stung by a scorpion on one of my fingers. It was about the most painful experience I've ever had. My finger and hand swelled almost immediately. It was like a bee sting, only 100 times worse. They gave me pills to stop the pain, and bathed the hand in hot water for a couple of hours. It is quite all right now, though a bit swollen.

I am sure that you would enjoy the views of the stars down here. The Dipper and the North Star are not visible, of course, and the appearance of the sky is entirely different. The Southern Cross is quite prominent and there are two large stars pointing to it. The Milky Way seems to be much brighter here, too. Almost overhead is a prominent naked-eye double at 8 p.m.

The natives are very interesting, too. I saw one yesterday with orange hair. His head looked like a flame in the sunlight. I believe the color is caused by some chemical they use. Many have reddish hair. The other day nine of the Melanesians paddled by in a large out-rigger canoe, and I swam out to meet them. They are very friendly to the Americans and white men generally. They aren't exactly what you would call pretty. Their teeth are black from chewing the betel nut. Some of them wear sticks through their ears. They wear very little clothing. Until very recently I had not seen any of the native women except at a great distance from the camp; but today a few of the ladies came by carrying heavy loads of bananas. Just like the Indians, the women do all the heavy work and the men just walk along. It seems to me that the natives here would offer possibilities for ceramics. There are some beautiful water color subjects here, and the natives would make good oil studies. You should see them climb the tall coconut trees. And, by the way, I'm getting sick of coconuts.

I'm washing my clothes tonight, but not in the way we usually do it. The clothes are tied to a rope and thrown into the surf with the end of the rope staked down. The clothes are rolled and are beaten by the waves. It does a rather effective job, but I imagine the fabrics won't stand up too long being ground on sand. The biggest trouble is the danger of the rope breaking and losing everything. I'll report on this method later.

We still see quite a few Australians. For some reason we don't get along too well with them. There's something sullen in the attitude of most Britishers, anyway. When we are out hitchhiking, the Aussies that are driving American trucks and jeeps will seldom stop for an American soldier. I wonder if the English are the same way.

You would certainly appreciate the beauty of these islands. Every opportunity I get I hitchhike around the various camps and towns to see the beautiful spots. I had a day off the other day, so I took a little sightseeing trip. I was looking mainly for souvenirs and I got a Jap helmet. On the way back, the black clouds were rolling in and the wind was blowing the coconut palms. The scene looked so much like the water colors Winslow Homer did in the South Pacific.

We very often have rains which clear up immediately and are followed by hot sunshine. We can usually expect a shower some time every night. There are some beautiful sunrises here. They are especially nice over the water. I can see the sunrise over the Pacific each morning, and the ships then are very beautiful. There are lovely purples and sometimes shades of brown, all reflected in the sea. This would be a wonderful place in which to spend a vacation when one would be free to look around. The mists hang low over the mountains and settle in the gullies; while the peaks are usually visible over the mist. We had a very beautiful sunrise yesterday. The sky was cloudy and there was a purple glow to all the sky. In the east, breaks in the clouds were yellow and red, and there was a peculiar tan color where the purple and yellow blended. Over the sea there are often lovely reds, purples and yellows against the patches of green sky. Of course, we always have magnificent cloud formations, usually cumulus. Stratus clouds hang over the mountains all the time. The other day the evening sunlight was striking a huge mass of cumulus with its golden light, and long stratus clouds in shadow were swung across the front of the peaks, while the blue sky at the back and the green vegetation along the shore below all combined to make a very colorful scene.

GUILD MEETINGS

Bill Burke

Sergeants Arthur Stewart and Addis Osborne of the Ordnance Training Center of Camp Santa Anita, provided one of the most entertaining programs at the meeting of the Guild on November 5 with a discussion of the subject, "Art in war Training," a lecture with 35 mm slides illustrating various phases of the art work at the camp.

Sergeant Stewart is an Alabaman who studied at the Chicago Art Institute and, before joining the army, was active in the field of portrait painting at various places in the South. He is director of the Art Section of the Training Aid Program at Camp Santa Anita.

Sergeant Osborne spent his early years in Canada, studied at the Chicago Art Institute and, before joining the army, was an instructor at the Institute. He is production manager of the Training Aid Program.

There are 135 men working in the Training Aid Division at the camp, including model makers, photographers, draftsmen and artists. Nearly all had experience in these skills in civilian life. The "training aids" consist of various types of art work. The section, according to Sergeant Stewart, is based upon the saying, "One picture is worth 10,000 words." It is the outgrowth of a group started at the Ordnance Proving Grounds at Aberdeen, Maryland. These men turn out graphic drawings which show how various types of army equipment, such as trucks and guns, are constructed and operate. In addition, they make terrain models illustrating problems of supply. These drawings and paintings are then used in training the men by graphic means to an understanding of the mechanisms used.

One of the most interesting phases of this work is one involving the use of plastiglas which they machine into forms similar to actual metal parts and place in working models. Guns, for example, are given "windows" through which the working parts can be seen. Various types of fine printing are utilized in the preparation of instruction booklets, and many poster-type drawings of equipment and of automotive repair are prepared for easy instruction.

* * * * *

The holder of the lucky ticket will leave the next meeting of the Arts Guild the possessor of a new oil painting. The program for this meeting, to be held on Friday

evening, December 3, at the Wistaria Vine Gardens, is to include a demonstration by Alfred James Dewey of the technique of oil painting. This demonstration will be accompanied by a running commentary by the artist on the technique in hand, during which the members of the audience are free to ask all the questions they please. The finished product, a landscape in oils, will be given away at the close of the meeting.

This should be an opportunity for someone to acquire a fine painting for a Christmas present rather inexpensively. As has been the case before when paintings were the prizes, many, no doubt, will want to take advantage of this opportunity.

Sandwiches and coffee will be served during the course of the evening.

SAN GABRIEL ARTISTS GUILD EXHIBIT

The San Gabriel Artists Guild presents for the month of December an exhibition of small paintings by the members of the Guild. This exhibition is to continue from the first of December throughout the month.

Honoring the exhibiting artists, a reception and tea is to be served at the gallery, 343 South Mission Dr., San Gabriel, by the Girl Scouts, from 3 to 6 p.m. on Sunday, December 5. Everyone is cordially invited to attend this Sunday meeting and bring friends.

These exhibitions of current art by the San Gabriel Artists Guild have proved popular and have been very successful in the past. In spite of the gasoline shortage and other handicaps due to the big show overseas, they continue to be very successful. This organization, in a few short years, under the leadership of Mr. Sam Hyde Harris, has accomplished a great deal and has won for itself a very enviable reputation.

The gallery is open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays, from 2 to 5 p.m.

THERE WAS ONCE A FRENCH GARDEN

Zoe Colt

A garden where peace dwelt -- though war, an American military hospital, was but three kilometers distant. Sometimes, when there was a lull in the business of mending young soldiers, a nurse would leave the hospital and seek out the garden.

On her bicycle she would pedal those few kilometers down the wide white country road, across the ancient suspension bridge, till she came to a red-roofed stone house centuries old. Behind it, the quiet garden stretched its green to the very edge of the slow-moving river. Tall poplars rustled, flowers filled the air with fragrance, and a gray kitten loved to sleep on the cobbled walk where sunlight lay warm and bright.

Here, into the garden, she was welcomed by Madame Bernard. Her hair whitened by years and sorrows, memories of other wars deep in her eyes, Madame was yet -- like her garden -- lovely and serene.

One day as the nurse pushed open the gate, she walked into the spicy aroma of new-made jelly and cookies. Homely smells of peace! Summertime and jelly-making! Perhaps her own mother, across the sea in her own country, was making jelly. Perhaps other mothers in other countries were performing sane duties that belonged to peace.

Madame brought out a plate heaped with cookies and set it on the table beside the French and English books.

"For you, Mam'selle," she smiled. "Rest a little before we begin the lesson. You look very tired."

The nurse leaned back in the chair and sighed. "Two hospital trains came in last night, and the boy with the gangrenous arm died this morning. He was only twenty."

"So young," said Madame compassionately. "And you are so young, my dear, to see so much suffering and sadness. It is good, I think sometimes, to be old: When we are old we no longer suffer so keenly, and we see more clearly. Just to be kind to one another -- that, I believe, is the greatest of all."

"Kindness!" the nurse thought. "If everyone were kind to one another there would be no more wars." Far overhead, an airplane droned on its way to some firing line.

And she remembered that one of the boys in her ward was also on his way to one of those lines. Now he was whole and well again, and he was on his way back to his outfit. He had told her goodbye only that morning.

"This morning," said Madame, "I made twelve glasses of grape confiture. One is for you. The grapes are very fine this year." The gray kitten leaped into her lap, and she stroked its soft fur while it purred in sleepy contentment. Restful silence fell.

"War --" the girl mused dreamily. "And here I am in a far-off land the very name of which is unreal --"

Over the flowers bees hummed ceaselessly. And she recalled a time long past when she had listened to their drowsy murmur amidst the white blossoms of a plum tree in whose shade she played at "house," and dreamed of the beautiful world she would know when a woman grown.

Madame's kind face bent over the books. "Shall we begin our lesson, my dear? It is page two hundred and two, lesson fifty-seven, n'est-ce pas? You will read and then translate for me."

A gentle breeze sang through the poplars, softly brushed the girl's cheek, and stirred the flowers to new fragrance. She settled back in her chair and began to read aloud.

"Les rues les plus grandes de Paris sont les boulevards, qui sont plantés d'arbres. Souvent les rues --"

The camp seemed very far away. The humming of the bees, the garden, and the serene old face of her friend were the realities.

"Now, we will see how well you can order a meal in French." She heard the tranquil voice of Madame, and her own hesitant answers. She was again a schoolgirl reciting her lessons.

Abruptly, distant shellfire crashed into a mad intensity. A train whistled. Toward the camp, a trailing ribbon of smoke -- another hospital train.

Slowly they put away the French and English books. Back over the wide white country road the nurse retraced her way. War was the reality. But for a little moment, in its midst, she had known peace.



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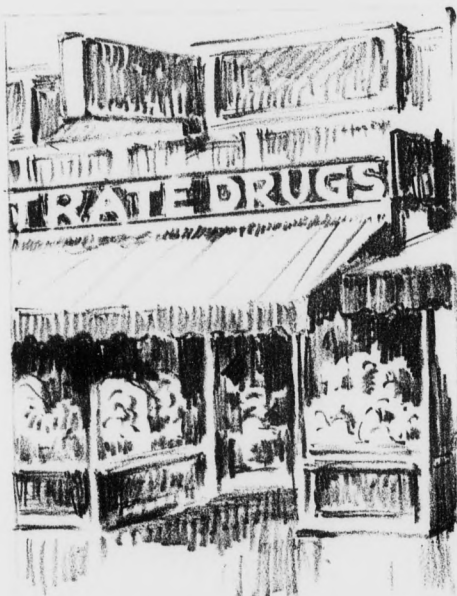
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